Rising Germanophobia: The Chief Obstacle to Current World War II Revisionism

by Michael F. Connors

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I. The Germanophobic Interpretation of Germany and Germans

It is widely conceded in theory today that the kind of thinking which presents any ethnic or national group in terms of a crude, unflattering, and inaccurate caricature is unfortunate and misleading, at best, and something rather more sinister at worst. Conversely, acceptance of other groups or countries on the basis of merit without reference to racial or national background is regarded as one of the distinguishing marks of the truly educated man.

One of the most widely publicized reasons offered in explanation of our vehement opposition to the regime of the late Adolf Hitler was its severe policy directed at Jews and other enemies of the regime. It is conveniently overlooked that there were over 3,000,000 Jews in Poland as compared to 500,000 in Germany, and that they were on the whole treated worse than the Jews were in peacetime national socialist Germany. By some curious irony, moreover, many of the same Americans who were so quick to attack the reprehensible national socialist racial doctrines have been among the worst offenders in spreading abroad an equally fantastic myth of unique German wickedness.

As a consequence of this Germanophobic myth, the very word German conjures up in all too many minds an uncomfortable image

of robot-like, goose-stepping legions of glassy-eyed storm troopers set in motion by the harshly barked commands of an Erich von Stroheim-type "Prussian" officer. Furthermore, "militarism," "aggressiveness," and a marked preference for "authoritarianism" over democracy have for over three decades been well-nigh universally regarded as "typically German" national traits.

Germanophobia in the 1930's and 1940's had for the "educated" classes in the West an appeal which could never have been affirmed for such concepts as "white supremacy" or anti-Semitism. Nor, indeed, has this situation really changed appreciably today. It is precisely this academic and intellectual respectability of the notion of unique German wickedness, based on specious racial and historical arguments, that has made of it such a dangerous fallacy.

II. American Opinion of Germany and Germans in the Nineteenth Century

This dark image of a sinister, aggressive, predatory, and militarily regimented Germany only became prevalent in the present century. The famed English historian Frederic William Maitland (1850-1906) has described the once characteristic attitude toward the Germans: ". . . it was usual and plausible to paint the German as an unpractical, dreamy, sentimental being, looking out with mild blue eyes into a cloud of music and metaphysics and tobacco smoke."[1]

The French writer Madame de Staël (1766-1817) romantically portrayed for the Napoleonic world of the early nineteenth century a Germany utterly unlike the grotesque image later drawn by Allied propagandists during two World Wars. Madame de Staël's Germans were a nation of "poets and thinkers," a race of kindly, impractical, other-worldly dreamers without national prejudices and, strangely, in the light of later propaganda, "disinclined to war."[2]

In America, too, a similarly warm view of things German predominated. It is difficult to exaggerate the constructive impact of German institutions and learning upon American life and the cordiality of the reception accorded them in the century or so from Frederick the Great to Bismarck. The story of this golden age of German-American relations has been ably chronicled by a very

[1]Quoted in Manfred Messerschmidt, *Deutschland in Englischer Sicht: Die Wandlungen des Deutschlandbildes in der Englischen Geschichtsschreibung* (Dusseldorf: Michael Triltsch Verlag, 1955), p. 51.

[2]George P. Gooch, *Germany* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927), p. 88.

thorough and gifted American scholar, Henry M. Adams, in his indispensable volume, *Prussian-American Relations, 1775-1871.*[3] In the cultural and intellectual spheres, as in the political realm, the relationship was one of immense mutual profit.

The Prussian system of higher education and the cultural flowering which characterized Prussia in the era of regeneration following upon the Napoleonic wars all left a distinct impression upon America. The list of American scholars and writers—George Tichnor, Edward Everett, Joseph Cogswell, George Bancroft, John Lothrop Motley, Henry E. Dwight, Washington Irving, Henry W. Longfellow, and James F. Cooper, to mention only some—who went to Prussia to secure inspiration for their life's work is a most impressive one. By most Americans, "whether seen in their newly united nation or in this country, the Germans were generally regarded as methodical and energetic people," indeed as "models of progress," while "in their devotion to music, education, science, and technology they aroused the admiration and emulation of Americans."[4]

It is evident then that the Germans in the nineteenth century ranked extremely high in the esteem of their European and American neighbors. Two unrelated historic factors seemed to conspire at the time to give widespread currency to views of this sort. First, there were the truly remarkable achievements of Germans in every sphere of cultural, intellectual, and scientific creativity. It could hardly have seemed amiss to speak of a nation of *Dichter und Denker* when one thought of the contributions to literature of Goethe and Schiller, the historical works of Niebuhr, von Ranke, and Mommsen, the philosophical studies of Kant and Hegel, the great scientific achievements of Alexander von Humboldt, Bunsen, von Liebig, Helmholtz, and Röntgen, and the varied musical achievements of Beethoven, Brahms, Schumann, the Strausses, and Wagner.

The second factor which seemed to support this amiable and admiring attitude toward the Germans was their military and political weakness before their achievement of national unification in 1871. One cannot imagine a more extreme contrast than that between Madame de Staël's Germans and the stereotyped image of monocled, burr-headed, heel-clicking, mindless robots which Holly-

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[3]Cleveland: The Press of Western Reserve University, 1960.

[4]Henry Cord Meyer, *Five Images of Germany: Half a Century of American Views on German History* (Washington, D.C.: The American Historical Association, 1960), p. 3.

wood and the yellow press have done so much to popularize in the 1930's and thereafter.

Possibly even more difficult to grasp, for those whose thinking has been shaped by the propaganda of recent years, is the fact that throughout the nineteenth century France rather than Germany was cast in the role of international bully and villain.[5] Had not Louis XIV and Bonaparte repeatedly made a battleground of Europe? Could anyone forget that French arms had rolled at high tide across the entire continent of Europe, threatening to engulf even the vast empire of the Russian tsars? Or could anyone forget that it had required the combined resources of Austria, Britain, Russia, and Prussia, assisted by the fortuitous intervention of nature in the form of a severe Russian winter, to shatter the might of the Corsican conqueror?

Much has been made in anti-German propaganda of the allegation that France has been invaded by Germany on three occasions in contemporary times, while overlooking the approximately thirty invasions of German territory by French forces during modern history. An examination of the relative warlike activities of European nations by the eminent American sociologist Pitirim Sorokin, surely no sympathizer with Germany, in his *Social and Cultural Dynamics,* placed Germany at the bottom of the list in the percentage of years engaged in warfare. From 1200 to 1925 "Germany had the smallest and Spain the largest percentage of years with wars."[6] In his monumental *A Study of War,* the eminent historian and political scientist Quincy Wright, in covering the period from 1480 to 1940, found that the percentage of participation of the main European nations in wars during this period was the following: England, 28; France, 26; Spain, 23; Russia, 22; Austria, 19; Turkey, 15; Poland, 11; Sweden, 9; Italy, 9; Netherlands, 8; Germany (including Prussia), 8; and Denmark, 7.[7] This should put at rest the myth that Germany has been the seat of military ardor and plotting throughout the course of modern history.

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[5]It should be noted that the old and persistent conviction that Franco-American relations were undeviatingly friendly throughout the nineteenth century is quite at odds with the facts. For a recent scholarly study which reveals the full extent of Franco-American estrangement during these years see Henry Blumenthal, *A Reappraisal of Franco-American Relations, 1830-1871* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1959).

[6]Pitirim A. Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics* (New York: American Book Company, Vols. I-III, 1937; Vol. IV, 1941), III, p. 352.

[7]Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1942, p. 221.

III. The Rise of Germanophobia

The thoroughgoing alteration of Anglo-American and French thinking about Germany in the twentieth century is one of the most curious and fascinating transformations in the whole course of intellectual history. As Professor Herbert Butterfield of Cambridge has pointed out, the hitherto nearly unrestrained admiration for Germany was now replaced by "a common opinion that Germany had been the aggressor and enemy of freedom throughout all the ages. . ."[8]

Anglo-German estrangement in the years before World War I was compounded in varying parts of naval rivalry and industrial and commercial competition. British publicists and historians, ever sensitive to the wishes of the foreign office, soon began to reflect this new state of affairs. American opinion was not far behind that of Britain, and with good reason for American writers and journals were mainly dependent upon British sources, especially the Germanophobic Harmsworth press, for information about European and particularly German affairs.

But it remained for entente propagandists of the 1914-1918 period to give birth to the truly pathological Germanophobia which has long since become so integral a part of Western thinking processes. Horrendous tales of fiendish German atrocities in Belgium and France, when combined with a universal conviction of "sole German guilt" for the war's origin, added up to a fixation of special German savagery. The products of Lord Bryce and Arnold J. Toynbee rank high in this effort. That the calm, sober researches of postwar Anglo-American "revisionist" scholars made a total shambles of the entente propaganda structure did not, however, prevent the rise after 1933 of a new and even more violent outpouring of Germanophobic sentiment in the West.

IV. The Intensification of Germanophobia during and after the Second World War

With the onset of World War II, in Britain as in the United States, the literature of Germanophobia reached flood-tide proportions. One may gather something of the spirit of this literature from the variant "solutions" it proposed for what it liked to call

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[8]Herbert Butterfield, *History and Human Relations* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952), pp. 162-163.

the "German problem." Among these were suggested population transfers, territorial dismemberment, and even, in one case, "eugenic sterilization" of 48,000,000 Germans of procreative age.[9] Nor were these merely the rantings of lunatic fringe fanatics. Earnest A. Hooton, an eminent Harvard anthropologist and Rhodes scholar, even suggested forced labor service by German soldiers throughout Europe after the war, with the dual purpose of simultaneously reducing the German birth rate and encouraging their cohabitation with non-German females to mix the supposedly more virulent German genes with the milder ones of other Europeans.[10] Anglo-American and French historians eagerly rushed into print with the most specious Germanophobic writings designed to prove that Hitler was the inevitable product of sinister forces long operative in German history, while an entire school of Sunday supplement writers, following the curious volume of Richard Brickner, sought to explain the "German problem" in terms of the jargon of psychiatry.[11] Hence, the German people were found to be the victims of collective schizophrenia or paranoia, depending upon the preference of the writer concerned, and implying the desirability of enslaving the Germans or exterminating them as suggested by T. N. Kaufman.

Between 1945 and 1960 there was a slight lessening of interest in Germany. Nevertheless, books and articles about Germany were still fairly plentiful. But to the shame of honest historiography there was only a very limited corrective literature to counter the tendentious interpretations of previous years. In reference to Germany these years saw a continuing "historical blackout," to borrow the apt phrase of Harry Elmer Barnes. Typical of postwar attempts by Western historians to perpetuate the Germanophobic myth was Hans Kohn's article, "Rethinking Recent German History."[12] Kohn resuscitated all the stock villains of German history who had long been so dear to the hearts of melodramatic anti-German writers: Bismarck as the supposed embodiment of Machiavellian power politics; the wicked Prussian and German ruling classes; that nebu-

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[9]Theodore N. Kaufman, *Germany Must Perish* (Newark: Argyle Press, 1941).

[10]John L. Snell, *Wartime Origins of the East-West Dilemma Over Germany* (New Orleans: The Hauser Press, 1959), pp. 8-9.

[11]See, e.g., A.J.P. Taylor's *The Course of German History* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1946); Edmond Vermeil's *Germany's Three Reichs: Their History and Culture* (London: Andrew Dakers Limited, 1945); William Montgomery McGovern's *From Luther to Hitler* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941); and Richard Brickner, *Is Germany Incurable?* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1943).

[12]*The Review of Politics,* July, 1952, pp. 325-345.

lous demon, German intellectual development, and all the rest of the tiresome litany. Kohn even attacked those who "attempt to show that the pernicious trends in modern German history were common to European civilization as a whole," citing as an example the charge that Gobineau's racism influenced Wagner, though it is an undeniable fact. It is not surprising that he should find that the national socialist "deviation from the main lines of European development . . . started long before Hitler."

A widely read college-level text in the popular and inexpensive Anvil series published by Van Nostrand gathers between its covers most of the threadbare clichés and superstitions ever penned by Germanophobic writers.[13] Its author, Louis L. Snyder, an ardent revisionist on World War I, is virtually obsessed with his favorite delusions of intellectual history. To read his account one might imagine that pre-national socialist Germany had some kind of monopoly on racism, anti-Semitism, and "irrationalism." Snyder has also managed to get himself regarded as an authority on Germany and books on Germany. He is, perhaps, the most prolific reviewer of books which appear on Germany, even in scholarly journals and in magazines of much popular prestige such as the *Saturday Review*. These reviews may well have accomplished more in the way of denigrating Germany and the Germans than his books. Another historian who is hard on the heels of Snyder and an ardent and ubiquitous anti-German reviewer is Gordon A. Craig of Stanford University.

One of the most persistent of the Germanophobic writers in the postwar period, and one with no apparent scholarly credentials, has been T. H. Tetens, whose fantastic volume, *Germany Plots with the Kremlin*,[14] gives a feverish account of an alleged diabolical scheme by German "geopolitical master minds" operating out of Madrid and Bonn to sell out the West to Moscow.

Undoubtedly the most successfully publicized and widely read book dealing with national socialist Germany to appear in America in the decade and a half following the end of the war was William L. Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*.[15] Despite its

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[13]Louis L. Snyder, *Basic History of Modern Germany* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1957).

[14]New York: Henry Schuman, Inc., 1953.

[15]New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960. Shirer followed this up with a shorter, watered-down version for elementary school children entitled *The Rise and Fall of Adolf Hitler* (New York: Random House, 1961) which has been described as "Shirer for tiny tots."

ingratiating style and the rave reviews of eager journalistic enthusiasts, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich,* embodying as it does many of the worst features of wartime Germanophobia, contributes very little to an honest understanding of German history during the period with which it is concerned. Again and again the reader is sharply reminded of Shirer's bias not merely against the national socialists but against the entire German people. As early as page five, for example, he writes that "the German people" were "a natural instrument which he [Hitler] was able to shape to his own sinister ends." Further on, the reader learns that "Nazism and the Third Reich . . . were but a logical continuation of German history" while Bismarck, Kaiser Wilhelm II, and Hitler left a common stamp upon the German people in the form of a "lust for power and domination, a passion for unbridled militarism, a contempt for democracy and individual freedom and a longing for . . . authoritarianism." Needless to say, Shirer ignores the role of Allied statesmen and of the Draconian Versailles peace in producing the rise of Hitler. It is not surprising then that he should neglect or disparage revisionist scholarship in relation to World War II.

England did not lag behind the United States in producing Germanophobic literature. The leaders were Robert Gilbert (Lord) Vansittart, Edward Frederick Langley (Lord Russell of Liverpool), and Hugh R. Trevor-Roper, Regius professor of modern history at Oxford, and an authority on the seventeenth century history of religious affairs and poetry. Of these, Vansittart was far the most effective, due to his high post in the British government. Vansittart began his attack on Germany as the unique warmonger and the main disturber of peace throughout European history by his *Black Record,* published in 1941. This was devastatingly demolished by the famous British naval historian Captain Russell Grenfell in his *Unconditional Hatred* (1953). Vansittart continued on this theme at greater length in *Lessons of My Life* (1943). He ended his anti-German crusade with a book on how to treat the Germans after World War II so as to insure their destruction as the chronic disturber of the peace of the world. More vehement than the writings of Vansittart as a jeremiad against the Germans were those of Lord Russell of Liverpool, whose first important work was *The Scourge of the Swastika* (1954). He returned to the fray after the Eichmann trial in *The Record* (1963), a slashing anti-German attack on Eichmann and his superiors. Professor Trevor-Roper has been the leading academic assailant of Hitler and the Germans, mainly through

semi-official editorial work in such books as *The Last Days of Hitler* (1947), *Hitler's Table Talk* (1953), *The Testament of Adolf Hitler* (1959), and *Hitler's Secret Conversations* (1961). He was a leading critic of Taylor's *Origins of the Second World War* but was badly worsted by Taylor in a London television debate about the book on the BBC on July 9, 1961.

Perhaps the most influential British attack on Hitler and national socialism was the book, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny,* by the Oxford professor and historian, Alan Bullock. First published in 1952, it went through many editions and appeared in an expanded and revised version in 1960. It abandoned the extreme polemic exposition of Vansittart and Lord Russell but its conclusions as to Hitler's dictatorship were essentially the same. Owing to its academic language and ostensible restraint, it exerted its great influence because it became the most widely used textbook, especially in the United States, on Hitler and national socialism, thus doing for the academic world what Vansittart and Lord Russell had done for the general reading public. Its bias and errors were laid bare by Francis Neilson in a lengthy review published in the *American Journal of Sociology and Economics,* July, 1958.

The newer and more virulent wave of postwar Germanophobia was stimulated by the seizure of Adolph Eichmann in Argentina in 1960 and his trial in 1961. For example, the above-mentioned T. H. Tetens made another contribution to the vast literature of Germanophobia with his *The New Germany and the Old Nazis*[16] which found the Bonn foreign office to be dominated by a reactivated "Ribbentrop Group." To Tetens, contemporary West Germany seemed but a discreetly veiled replica of the Third Reich and prominent Germans including Ludwig Erhard (then finance minister) were but unregenerate national socialists. A bit more restrained than the wild rhetorical sallies of Tetens were the assaults of Professor Snyder, who is also, as we have seen, a veteran of the literary war against Germany.[17] Conveniently disregarding the matter of the war-guilt clause of the Treaty of Versailles as a factor in the rise of Hitler, he predictably blamed everything on "the very nature of German culture" and pontificated that "in Germany the people followed even an evil genius like Hitler simply because they were trained to follow the leader—no matter what he did." The routine

[16]New York: Random House, 1961.
[17]*Hitler and Nazism* (New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1961).

preoccupation with probing the allegedly morbid German intellectual history with a view to finding there an all-sufficing explanation of everything that went wrong in the world after 1933, thereby precluding any serious discussion of World War II revisionist literature, has proceeded unceasingly.[18]

As just intimated above, the most blatantly offensive and exaggerated anti-German literature, much of it in the paperback field and dealing in painfully clinical but totally onesided detail, with gruesome tales of wartime German physical atrocities, followed in the aftermath of the Eichmann case.[19]

This demonstrated the morbid and almost fanatical interest of the American reading public in an endless recital of horror stories revealing alleged German atrocities. The press and all our other communication agencies made the most of it and have not ceased to this day. The more reasonable Jewish accounts of Eichmann and his trial, such as Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem,* were vigorously attacked by other Jewish writers such as Jacob Robinson in his *And the Crooked Shall Be Made Straight.* The opportunity for sensational publicity based on gruesome tales of German atrocities was revived by the Frankfurt trial of war criminals in 1964, which concentrated mainly on the horrors allegedly committed at Auschwitz. To provide more opportunity for publicity, this was strung out for an entire year by spacing the meetings of the court. Then, in 1965, the West Germans were pressured into setting aside their statute of limitations on war-crimes trials so that they can go on indefinitely, and further reports of savagery are frequently recounted to the American public by the press and other communication agencies.

This writer quite frankly regrets having to deal at all with this thoroughly distasteful body of literature designed to convey in an

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[18]See, e.g., Fritz Stern's *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961).

[19]Limitations of space preclude mention of every volume of this kind but a representative selection might include the following: John Donovan, *Eichmann: Man of Slaughter* (New York: Avon Books, 1960); Comer Clarke, *Eichmann: The Man and His Crimes* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1960); H. A. Zeiger (ed.), *The Case Against Adolf Eichmann* (New York: Signet Books, 1960); Louis Hagen, *The Mark of the Swastika* (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1965); Robert Neumann and Helga Koppel, *The Pictorial History of the Third Reich* (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1962); Quentin Reynolds, *Minister of Death* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1961); Lord Russell of Liverpool, *The Record* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1963); and Jacob Robinson, *And the Crooked Shall Be Made Straight* (New York: Macmillan, 1965).

explosively sensational and irresponsible manner the impression that national socialist war crimes were of unique magnitude and depravity. Unfortunately, however, the sheer bulk of this literature with its tiresome repetition of the same Germanophobic theme makes it impossible for one to ignore it. Publishers are by no means the only offenders in this matter for television and the movies have, if anything, outdone them in the campaign to vilify Germany. In addition to such newer products as *Judgment at Nuremberg*, the worst of the old propaganda films from the 1930's and 1940's are being rerun with monotonous regularity.[20] Soviet sympathizers are obviously not displeased with this continuing Germanophobic publicity bath which serves as a moral rationale for preventing the German reunification and nuclear arming of West Germany. This subject and related matters were dealt with at some length in my article, "Current Germanophobia: The Transmission Belt of Communist Propaganda," in the *Social Justice Review* for December, 1962.

V. German and Allied Atrocities: A Morbid Balance-Sheet

Professor Harry Elmer Barnes once observed that the question of World War II atrocities is rather a dangerous one for *either* side to concern itself unduly. Even though some genuinely impartial tribunal (which by definition excludes both the Nuremberg process and the trial of Adolph Eichmann in Jerusalem) should one day find that the national socialist war crimes were fully as brutal and extensive as has been alleged in the most extreme of the recent charges, it could still be cogently argued that they were at least equaled and possibly surpassed by those of Germany's enemies.

There is, to begin with, the matter of Allied saturation bombing of civilian populations. Contrary to popular opinion, not the Germans but the British initiated the barbaric practice of unrestricted bombing of civilian areas. The unbelieving reader need only consult the testimony of the informed and responsible *British* officials, J. M. Spaight and Air Marshal Sir Arthur Harris, for proof of this charge.[21] The decision (the "splendid decision," as former Principal Secretary of the Air Ministry Spaight terms it) was first activated on May 11, 1940, while the German air attack on Britain did not begin as protective retaliation until July of that year. This "splen-

[20]See the incisive comments of Professor Russell Kirk on the recent deluge of Germanophobic television fare in the Atlanta *Times* of March 9, 1965.

[21]J. M. Spaight, *Bombing Vindicated* (London: Geoffrey Bles, Ltd., 1944); and Sir Arthur Harris, *Bomber Offensive* (London: Collins, 1947).

did" British decision, which cost millions of lives including those of Britons, had an even more grisly development for, according to Sir Charles Snow, who had charge of selecting scientific personnel for war research in Britain at the time, F. A. Lindemann, a cabinet member and confidant of Churchill, produced early in 1942 a remarkable cabinet paper dealing with the bombing of Germany:

> "It described in quantitative terms, the effect on Germany of a British bombing offensive in the next eighteen months (approximately March, 1942-September, 1943). The paper laid down a strategic policy. The bombing must be directed essentially against German working-class houses. Middle-class houses have too much space round them and so are bound to waste bombs . . ."[22]

One may wonder if it was the "cultivated humanitarianism" inherent in this decision to minimize the bombing of strategic targets and to assure the death of more working-class Germans per bomb which entitled the Allies, and in particular the British, to sit in moral judgment on German leaders at Nuremberg in 1945-1946. The property damage from all of this staggers the human imagination even in retrospect. In major cities like Berlin, Cologne, and Hamburg it ranged from forty to seventy per cent of all housing units while in smaller cities such as Düren, Bocholt, and Paderborn it averaged better than ninety per cent of all prewar housing units.[23] The utterly needless bombing of Dresden, approved by Churchill, destroying one of the most beautiful cities in the world which had no strategic military significance and produced a death toll in excess of either of the atomic bombings of Japanese cities, was perhaps the most brutal and senseless atrocity connected with World War II.

It has now been definitely proved that those who persuaded President Truman to order the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were well aware that it was not needed to make the Japanese surrender, which they had been trying to do for some seven

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[22]C. P. Snow, *Science and Government* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 48.

[23]Neil P. Hurley, "Germany's New Urban Profile," *America*, May 9, 1959, p. 306. Fuller studies of the Allied aerial assault on Germany are Hans Rumpf's *The Bombing of Germany* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1964); and Martin Caidin, *The Night Hamburg Died* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1960). Perhaps the most savage single Allied "war crime" was the bombing of the beautiful city of Dresden, "the most senseless act of mass murder committed in the whole course of World War II," as R.H.S. Crossman described it in his article, "Apocalypse at Dresden," in *Esquire*, November, 1963, p. 149. See also David Irving's *The Destruction of Dresden* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963).

months on the same terms that were accepted on VJ-Day. The bombings were executed to impress the Russians with the magnitude and superiority of our new military technology. Aside from the death and destruction that these bombings produced, they introduced a new era in devastation which may well end in the extermination of much of the human race.

Any balancing of the books of history in this matter of World War II atrocities must take into account the mass expulsion in 1945 of nearly 14,000,000 Eastern Germans from their ancestral homelands by the Czechs, Poles, and Soviets with the tacit connivance of the Western Allies. Surely this was a "war crime" by any standard. Moreover, it takes on distinctly macabre overtones when we examine the discrepancy between the number of those expelled and those who actually reached West Germany alive. Outright murder, physical assault, starvation, exposure, and disease were the causes of this mortality which took the lives of nearly four million victims of mass brutality.

Can anyone doubt that the "Morgenthau Plan" which envisaged the destruction of the Ruhr mines, the pastoralization of a primarily industrial Germany, and the political dismemberment of Germany was a moral "war crime"? Had this genocidal plan been carried out rigorously, from twenty to thirty millions of Germans would have died of starvation. Though never implemented to the letter, its spirit so permeated the occupational planning for Germany under the early "levels of industry" plans that for a long time after the war had ended, Germans were deliberately kept on a diet comparable to that enjoyed by the inmates of Auschwitz until the German forces were disorganized.

Who can doubt the criminal nature of the Soviet butchery of thousands of Polish officers in the Katyn forest in 1940? What is to be said of the forcible return of some millions of Russian military and civilian anti-Communist refugees by the Western Allies to the tender mercies of the men in the Kremlin after the war? Tens of thousands were summarily shot, and millions went to a condition worse than death in the Soviet labor camps in Siberia and elsewhere. A Yugoslav publicist, Mihajlov, examining the Russian records in Moscow in 1964, discovered that Stalin maintained twice as many concentration camps as the Germans are said to have set up. It would require considerable restraint to doubt that the mortality in them was as great as has been reported in the German camps.

How is one to explain the conduct of our "noble" Soviet allies, as we then liked to call them, who distinguished themselves by brutalizing the women of conquered lands?[24] Could the enthusiastic response of the Soviet soldiery to the incitements of Ilya Ehrenburg to seize the women of Germany as the spoils of victory, which resulted in the rape of half the women of Berlin alone, lend substance to the pretensions of moral dignity assumed by the prosecuting powers at Nuremberg?

Were the German camps for Allied prisoners of war really worse than those we established for captured German military personnel? According to the report of Judge Edward L. van Roden, an eminent American jurist who headed an official commission of inquiry into the matter, our investigators, burning with a zeal for justice, applied revolting physical torture methods to extort "war crime" confessions from hapless German prisoners of war.

Dare we omit any mention of the enforced transfer in 1942 of Japanese inhabitants of our own Pacific coastal region to concentration camps in the interior of the country?

It would seem safe to conclude then that a final summation or balance sheet of German war crimes honestly verified will most assuredly be counterbalanced by the equally sordid record of Germany's self-righteous enemies. Surely the dawning of that day will symbolize the return of sanity to the study and writing of recent history.

VI. The Historical Smotherout and the Attempted Stultification of Revisionism

The unending reiteration of the theme of unique German savagery in the waging of World War II has not been without consequences for historical research and writing. Most importantly, it has served to preclude, through intimidation or lack of interest, the normal development of scholarly inquiry into the causes of World War II. As a faculty colleague of this writer expressed it: "What difference does it make as to who started the Second World War? Whatever

[24]There is ample documentation to substantiate charges of mass Soviet violations of German women and girls. See A. J. App, *Ravishing the Women of Conquered Europe* (Philadelphia: Boniface Press, 1960); Johannes Kaps (ed.), *The Tragedy of Silesia: 1945-46* (Munich: Christ Unterwegs, 1952-53); Wilhelm K. Turnwald (ed.), *Documents on the Expulsion of the Sudeten Germans* (Munich: Munich University Press, 1953); and Theodor Schieder, *Documents on the Expulsion of the Germans from Eastern-Central Europe* (Bonn: Federal Ministry for Expellees, Refugees, and War Victims, 1960-61).

responsibility may be laid at the door of Allied leaders for the coming of World War II by even the most careful and meticulous research is overshadowed and made simply irrelevant by what the Germans did during the war to Jews and others."

This attitude reflects what Dr. Barnes, in his preceding material, has called the "historical smotherout," which has extended if not supplanted the traditional historical blackout with which revisionist historians have had to deal in the past, or it may be regarded as a new and more frustrating technique of applying the blackout to revisionist historical writing. It is true that Germanophobia stimulated, reinforced, and protected those who have operated the historical blackout in their efforts to withstand and defeat revisionist historical writing by disparaging its activities and achievements. But, for the most part, the historical blackout consisted in the attempt directly to discredit revisionist books and their conclusions. There was no doubt expressed as to the importance of revisionist conclusions if they could be established beyond reasonable doubt, but the anti-revisionists contended that this was impossible and used the historical blackout to obscure any demonstration that they were not correct in their attitude.

The historical smotherout may still employ some of the methods of the earlier historical blackout but if so, this is wholly secondary to the newer strategy and techniques which are based primarily on exploiting the increasing volume and irresponsible use of Germanophobia. Political motivation is far more apparent and potent. Germanophobia is powerfully stimulated and supplied from Communist sources as well as from the West, and one of the main sources is Warsaw. It is designed to postpone or prevent any stable peace settlement, especially the unification of Germany. The direct appeal is made to the public rather than to scholars, and reliance is placed primarily on voluminous and unscrupulous use of publicity through all agencies of communication.

The historical smotherout also introduced a marked change of emphasis as to the importance of war responsibility. Whereas the historical blackout had admitted that this was of great scholarly and public significance, the smotherout rests on the assumption that it is relatively unimportant and can be virtually ignored when it is at all advantageous to do so. What is of vital significance is not what happened prior to the outbreak of war but the operations of the combatants after hostilities had broken out, with emphasis almost wholly given over to the morbid and brutal operations of

the Germans. In other words, revisionist achievements in regard to the coming of war in 1939 and American entry in 1941 are to be nullified rather than refuted. Even if revisionists could prove the primary responsibility of Halifax and the British for beginning the conflict in 1939, this would be of no practical import, nor would any provocative policy on the part of Roosevelt in regard to Japan be of any vital significance, even if this interpretation could be upheld by the documentary evidence.

It is obvious that this new smotherout technique, based on a flood of publicity revolving about unique German turpitude, makes it almost impossible for revisionist scholars to make any progress whatever in affecting public opinion, no matter how much or how important the material may be that they keep turning up. If they could not have any significant influence in the 1950's, when the small library of impressive revisionist books was appearing and Germanophobia was far less overpowering than that since 1960, there is surely little prospect for revisionist influence now that the historical smotherout, based on irresponsible Germanophobia, has become thoroughly established and has monopolized public attention and opinion.

There is little that can be done to confront this brazen enterprise of writing history backward beyond quietly continuing to pile up revisionist discoveries and synthesis against the time when Germanophobia cannot nullify the effect of revisionist studies and publications. (It almost sounded like an attempt at political black humor on the part of President Johnson when he offered the Germans a partnership with the United States in the future probing of outer space, just before Christmas of 1965, at a time when the systematic defamation of the Germans was still in full swing in American books, magazines, and newspapers, and on American radio, moving pictures, and television.) There is little prospect that such nullification will really cease until there are drastic political realignments that compel American policy to assume new positions antagonistic to Germanophobia and impel our communication agencies to reflect this changed attitude. This time may be far off. In the meantime, as Dr. Barnes has suggested, revisionist scholars can only work conscientiously for the historical record, hoping that it may ultimately be accorded both scholarly approval and public respect.